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Missionary volunteers robbed, kidnapped

MORIJA, Lesotho (BP) — While millions of Americans watched the Super Bowl Jan. 31, a missionary couple in the southern African country of Lesotho were robbed at gunpoint and kidnapped by a gang of thieves.

Gene and Jean Phillips, emeritus Southern Baptist missionaries serving a volunteer term in Morija, Lesotho, were awakened at 2 a.m. Monday (7 p.m. EST Sunday) by five armed men who had entered the bedroom where they were sleeping.

The men demanded money and forced the pair into the back of the couple's four-wheel-drive vehicle, which was parked in front of the house.

As the kidnappers started the vehicle, they set off its theft alarm. The shriek awakened a neighbor, who looked out to see the vehicle pulling away.

When a telephone call to the local police station went unanswered, one calls set in motion a chain of prayer that reached all the way back to the United States, including the couple's home congregation, First Church in Camden, S.C.

"The chain of prayer started about 3 a.m.," said Wes Gestring, the Phillipses' son-in-law who serves with his wife, Elizabeth, as a Campus Crusade for Christ missionary in the nearby town of Roma. "While you guys were watching the Super Bowl, this was happening to them."

As the thieves drove the couple into an isolated area in the mountains, they repeatedly threatened to kill them, Gestring said. At 3 a.m. — just as fellow Christians began

identify the kidnappers," said Clyde Berkley, associate director of the board's work in southern Africa. "There were a lot of people praying, and there's no doubt God answered those prayers."

light dawned, they found a man who got help for them.

A couple of hours later, they were safely back in Morija, where police agencies and other missionaries were mobilizing to mount a search.

"Missionary Aviation Fellowship was preparing to put planes up in the air to search for them," Gestring said.

"Their landlord already had been out looking for them on dirt roads he knew of. A major in the South African Defense Force was about ready to send out troops to look for them," he reported.

"When we heard people had been praying for us much of the night, we understood why we were not killed and why we had such strength to walk all those hours and why we found just the right people to help," said Jean Phillips.

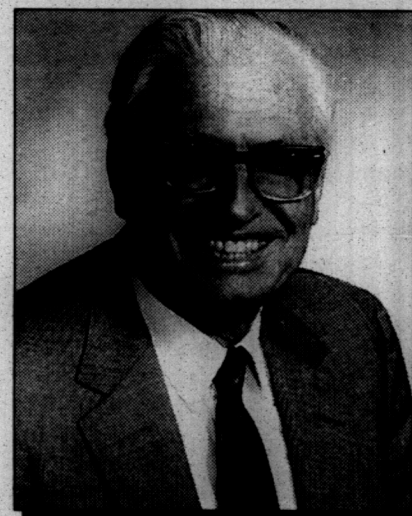
"We clung to verses from God's Word as we committed ourselves to him, for him to be glorified by our life or our death."

"We have seen him at work, and we know that he has called us to join him in what he is doing."

Jean Phillips asked believers to continue praying for them and for Lesotho.

"Pray that God will heal our memories and continue to give us his peace," she said.

"Pray for the men who did this terrible crime, that the words of love and kindness and the witness we gave them from the Lord will convict them and that they will be saved and changed into the people God has planned for them to be, and join us in praying that much fruit will be borne for his glory through all that has happened."



ANSWERED PRAYERS — Emeritus Southern Baptist missionary Gene Phillips (left) and his wife Jean were serving as volunteer missionaries in Morija, Lesotho, when they were kidnapped. The Phillipses credit answered prayers with their safe return. (IMB photos)

praying — the gang decided to leave the couple on the road — alive and unharmed.

Officials at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) in Richmond, Va., were relieved to hear the couple had been released safely.

"In similar circumstances in southern Africa, people are commonly killed because they can

The Phillipses were appointed as missionaries to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1956 and served through a period of strife and revolution that resulted in the country's independence from the United Kingdom in 1980.

They retired in 1996 and began the Lesotho assignment in discipleship and leadership training through the IMB's International Service Corps program in December.

From 3-6 a.m., while emergency prayer networks spread the news of the kidnapping, the Phillipses wandered through darkened cornfields. As day-

Civil war targets Baptists

WASHINGTON (BP) — The offices of the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone in Freetown as well as Regent Road Church, the first Baptist church in Africa, founded in 1794, have been burned by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front, according to a Jan. 21 message from the convention's general secretary, Moses Khanu, to the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

Khanu also voiced concern about the people and churches east of Freetown, the nation's capital, where most of the fighting is taking place between the rebels and the Sierra Leone government led by President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah with help from a Nigerian-led regional army.

The compound of the European Baptist Mission (EBM) in Freetown survived a bomb and provided a safe haven for neighboring residents. Detlef Kapteina, EBM Africa secretary, called it "a miracle" that the rebels did not destroy it as they passed by.

"The greatest need now is for food," Khanu said in an appeal to Baptist World Aid, the relief and development arm of the BWA. There is still no news from interior places like Lunsar and Makeni, Khanu said in his faxed message.

Khanu said he and his family are safe. "The Almighty God saved us. We survived the reign of terror leashed on us by the rebels," he reported.

"Please continue to pray and hope for restoration in Sierra Leone," Khanu said.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

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MBF reports 22% rise

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Looking back

10 years ago

Leake Association honors Cindy Blocker for her work at the association's crisis closet. She has worked on lunch hours, weekends, and nights helping people who need clothing, according to David Satterwhite, Leake director of missions, who presented the award.

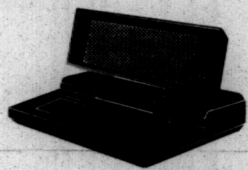
20 years ago

Tallahatchie Association plans a WIN school for all the churches in the association at Cowart Church. Finley Evans, foster missionary for Tallahatchie Association, and William Waddle of Emmanuel Church, Grenada, are leaders. Larry Badon is the associational evangelism chairman.

50 years ago

D.A. "Scotchie" McCall, executive secretary for Mississippi Baptists, is the main speaker for the Youth For Christ Master Rally at Calvary Church, Jackson, on Saturday evening, Feb. 12, 1949. Also featured is the Clarke College Glee Club.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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A few suggestions for the new Barbie

Say it ain't so! Could it be true that Barbie, the American cultural icon who will turn age 40 in March, is set to appear later this year with a tattoo and body-pierced friends? If news media accounts are to be believed, it is indeed true.

According to a recent Associated Press (AP) report, the doll with which most American girls grew up — the role model doll who has had 75 careers in 40 years, as well as an uncountable number of wholesome friends and hobbies — is about to drop to the lowest common denominator where fashion and peers are concerned.

"Barbie just isn't as cool as she used to be, but she's working to get back in the cool crowd," Marianne Szymanski, editor of Toy Tips magazine in Milwaukee, explained to AP.

Included in the Mattel showcase at the International Toy Fair next week will be a line of dolls called Generation Girls, in which the butterfly-tattooed Barbie will appear with a companion doll sporting a nose ring.

In describing the Butterfly Art Barbie (Art?) as part of the new line of dolls that will also include, among other items, an updated Working Woman Barbie bundled with a toy laptop computer and a real interactive CD-ROM, Anne Parducci, senior vice-president of Barbie marketing at Mattel, said, "We want to make sure we capture girls in the many ways they are spending their time now and in the future."

Right. Translation into plain English: Barbie is a two-billion-dollar-a-year business, and we're not about to let that kind of money get away from us.

Poor Barbie. She's been accused over the years of everything from being a blonde airhead to fomenting self-hatred among her young followers. Caving in to our modern American culture (term used loosely), Barbie's makers have over the years recreated her as a business-suited executive, reduced her bustline, and remolded her image in other ways.

Now we have Barbie mutilating herself and hanging out with cultural dropouts. Somehow, that change seems monumentally different from the earlier changes. Apparently tattoos and nose rings pass for chic these days among the ever-aimless "in" group and, after all, Barbie's ultimate goal in life to get back with the cool crowd.

If Mattel is really concerned that Barbie reflect the interests of modern American girls, maybe a few suggestions for future dolls are in order:

♦ **True Love Barbie.** This doll wears a special ring on her wedding finger, and on her desk in her doll house is a pledge promising to save herself for the unmatched pleasures of lifetime marriage to Ken.

♦ **Mission Barbie,** to represent the record numbers of young women giving up vacations each year to serve as Baptist Student Union Summer Missionaries.

♦ **Soccer Mom Barbie,** for the women who studied for years and built extraordinary careers, only to put their personal ambitions on hold long enough to raise their children at home.

♦ **Modesty Barbie.** Utilizing concepts almost extinct in America, this Barbie dresses conservatively, eschews garish make-up, and does her best to avoid the sexualization constantly thrust upon young girls by the media/entertainment complex.

Who knows? It's a long shot, but maybe

"OUR SERMON TODAY IS ON
SECURITY — THE NEED FOR IT AND
THE SILLY WAYS WE SEEK IT!"



someday someone will manufacture dolls that truly reflect the dreams and aspirations of young boys and girls.

Better yet, maybe we should just rely on the one authentic, unchanging role model who is not given to following the cultural fashion-of-the-moment.

He's not in a toy store, and if you're not sure where to find him, just ask any Christian.

They'll be glad to show you the way.

GUEST OPINION:



Building bridges

By Dolphus Weary, executive director
Mission Mississippi

Racism was obvious to me as I grew up in Mississippi in the 1950s and '60s, where I saw signs which stated, "White only" or "Colored only." I felt a sense of hopelessness and I almost blamed God, because as a young black man I thought God was against me and all black people.

Despite coming to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, I dreamt of running away from the daily difficulties caused by racism. My dream came true when I received a basketball scholarship to a college in California.

I believed in my heart that I would never return to Mississippi.

However, during my years in college and seminary, I recognized with the Lord's help that racism was not just a problem in Mississippi or the South, but rather was a sin that affected all of the United States — including the Body of Christ.

In 1971, God brought me back to work with the ministry in Mendenhall where I had become a Christian. For the past year, God has provided an opportunity for me to work with Mission Mississippi, a statewide effort

that encourages reconciliation in the Body of Jesus Christ.

On Nov. 30, 1998, I had a wonderful chance to share this message with the congregation of First Church, Jackson. In my sermon, I urged this main point: If we can cooperate with Christ by allowing him to help us build bridges, we can make the Christian community



Race Relations Sunday

February 14, 1999

stronger through God's grace.

The first and greatest bridge is the bridge that spans the gulf which separated sinful humankind from God. God himself created this bridge in the finished work of the cross. Every individual can experience salvation through the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

The second bridge we must

build with the help of Christ. We must settle matters with ourselves on a personal, internal basis. In Gal. 2:20, Paul states if we believe in Christ, we belong to the Lord and not our "old self."

The third bridge we need to build with Christ's help is a bridge of reconciliation to our families. We must learn to reach across barriers and build bridges of love and communication to our spouses and children.

A fourth bridge that we must build with Christ is a bridge of reconciliation between people who are of our same race and culture. If we are in a right relationship with God, we must model Christ's love for his church to brothers and sisters who look like us.

Lastly, the fifth bridge that Christ wants to help us build is a bridge of reconciliation between those who are of different races. God tells us everywhere in his Word that he desires for us to be united (Eph. 4:3).

Let's take the focus off ourselves — our feelings, past hurts, doubts, and fears — and put the focus on Christ Jesus. If we surrender to him, he will show us how, when, and where to begin building those bridges.

Miss. couple headed to Ukraine missions

By Carl M. White
Associate editor

Thomas and June Nolen arrived in Odessa, Ukraine Saturday, Feb. 6, where they will be serving as International Service Corps volunteers with the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention. They will serve as on site coordinators for Southern Baptists groups doing mission work in the former communist country.

Though not specifically assigned to coordinate the three year Mississippi Baptist partnership with Ukrainian Baptists, this partnership is expected to occupy much of their time. So much so, the Mississippi Baptist Partnership Missions office has agreed to help underwrite much of their on site expenses, plus provide a lap-top computer for their work.

The Nolens will make arrangements for mission groups coming to Ukraine, such as housing, transportation, and translators for each group. They will also work with IMB missionaries and Ukrainian Baptist Union officials in coordinating mission work.

During a Feb. 2nd meeting at the Baptist Building in Jackson, Paul Harrell, director of Partnership missions, and Jim Futral, Executive Director-Treasurer of Mississippi Baptists, presented the computer and startup monies to the Nolens.

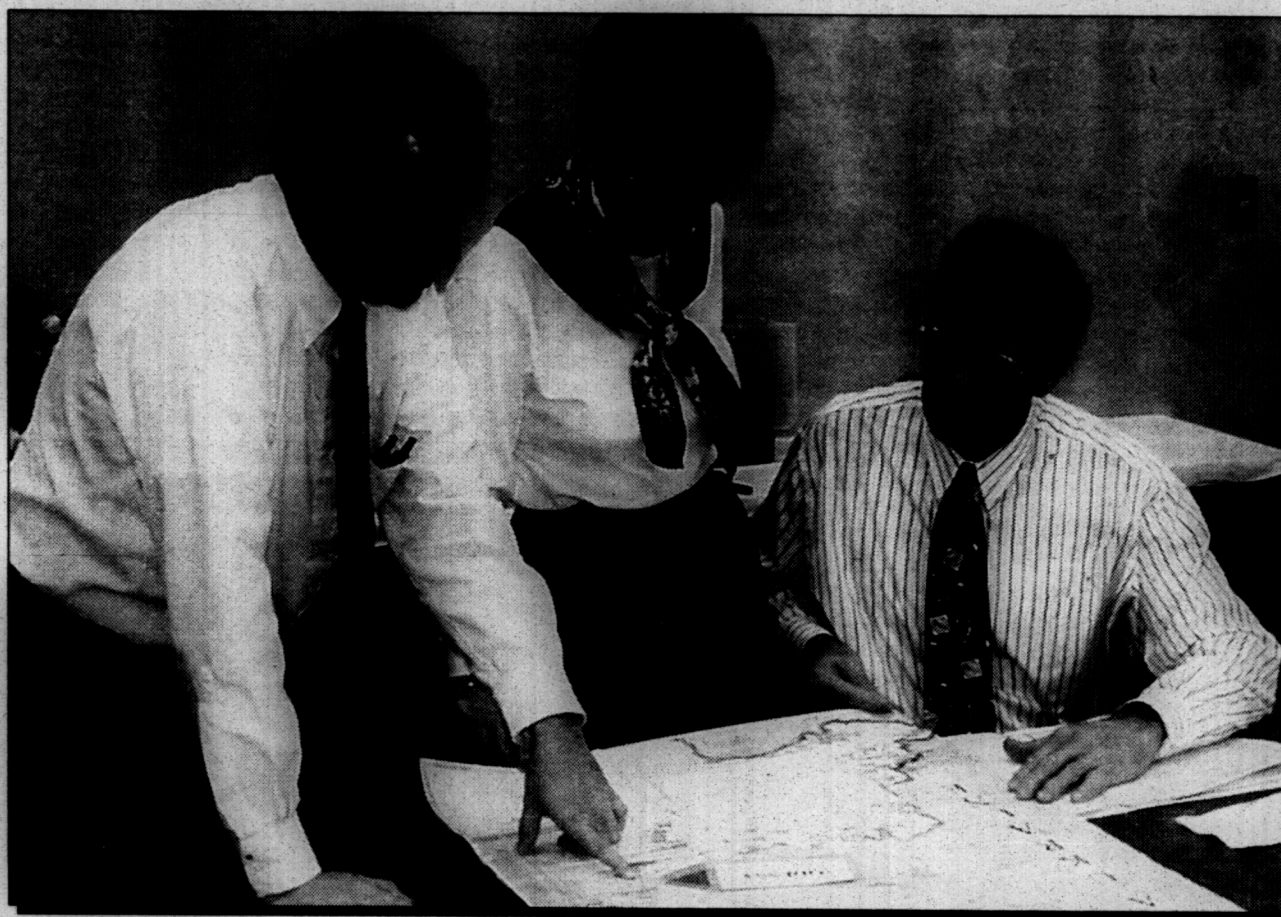
For the Nolens, this multi-year commitment to Ukraine is the next step in a life-time of commitment to volunteer missions that started when Thomas was in the Navy and the couple helped struggling churches on the west coast.

"In 1982, after seven years of praying, we went on our first medical mission trip," June said.

They went again in 1983. Then in 1987, they went on a mission trip to Mexico, their first foreign mission experience.

"We have been on 30 or 40 volunteer mission trips," June said.

The Nolen's have also been involved in MBCB partnership



Gene Gillis (left), pastor of Cleary Church, Rankin Association, and a partnership missions liaison, discusses strategy while looking at a map of Ukraine with June (center) and Thomas Nolen (right), Volunteer Coordinators for the International Mission Board in Ukraine. (Photo by Carl M. White)

missions almost since the beginning, participating in the second project, with Japan, in 1989.

After over 30 years in Mantee, the Nolens have sold their house and are now moving to Ukraine.

"The thing that led us to this point is that we have seen the impact that missions has on people's lives, both on the field and at home," June said.

"I've seen people with little self confidence and low self esteem go on mission trips and come back changed. Some have experienced God's call and gone on to seminary for training."

"The Lord walked us right into the Ukraine starting in January of 1998," Thomas said.

"We started praying, asking God what he wanted us to do. One concern was our jobs. Then my company was bought out by another company, and many were offered early retire-

ment. I came home and told June, 'God took care of my job,'" Thomas said.

Another concern was their daughter, Julie Barnette of Madison, and Thomas' father, a retired pastor living in Eupora. When they both gave their support, the Nolen's knew that the Lord was opening the door.

Also during the Feb 2nd meeting, plans for the first year of the three year partnership were discussed. Gene Gillis, pastor of Cleary Church in Rankin Association and Ukrainian Partnership liaison, presented a map of the Odessa oblast (region) showing where senior pastor Vladimir Shemchishin has asked Mississippi Baptists to help replant nine churches. Gillis indicated that this is an area where churches were pretty much wiped out during communist persecution.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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The first of eight trips to Ukraine in 1999 is planned for May 22 - June 2, and is led by Brent Barker, pastor of Goodwater Church in Simpson Association. This is a construction/evangelism project in the town of Kotobka.

For more information about the Ukrainian Partnership or other partnership mission opportunities contact Paul Harrell, Partnership Missions Office, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside of Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Mississippi CP report

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2,532,271 in January through the Cooperative Program, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the funds according to the budget approved by the 1998 Mississippi Baptist Convention.

This amount is \$240,572, or 10.50%, more than that given in January of last year. And it is \$314,947, or 14.20% more than the pro rata budget.

The pro rata budget is figured by taking the total Cooperative Program budget of \$26,607,890, dividing by 12, and multiplying by the number of months elapsed.

The 1998 Cooperative Program gifts exceeded the basic budget by \$1,242,812. Fifty percent of that amount was added to gifts to Christian education and 50 % to missions in Mississippi and around the world.

The Cooperative Program helps fund such programs as the Growth Spiral Conference in Jackson on Feb. 16; a Reconciliation Workshop in Jackson on Feb. 18; and a conference on Parenting Teenagers in 2000 in Jackson on Feb. 19-20.

SBC Cooperative Program

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for January were down 4% compared to a year ago but the year-to-date receipts are still up more than 7%, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For January 1999, the CP receipts totaled \$16,269,698 compared to January 1998 of \$16,970,404, a decrease of 4.13% or \$700,706.

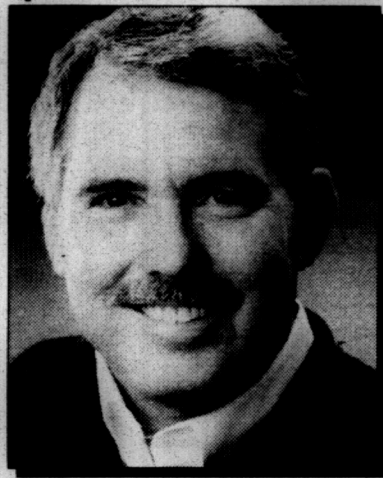
For the SBC fiscal year, after four months, CP gifts totaled \$56,233,784 compared to the previous year's total of \$52,534,658, an increase of 7.04% or \$3,699,126.

Designated gifts for the month of January were \$20,514,687 compared to the same month in 1998 of \$21,412,350, a decrease of 4.19% or \$897,663. For the year to date, designated gifts total \$29,073,547 compared to the previous year of \$29,120,010, a slight decrease of 0.16% or \$46,463.

For the SBC's Program Allocation Budget, at the end of four months, the required budget amount of \$51,668,574 was surpassed by \$4,656,210, an increase of 8.84%.

Trent featured at 'Parenting Teenagers' conf.

Award-winning author John Trent will be the featured speaker at the Parenting Teenagers in 2000 conference on Feb. 19-20 at Colonial Heights Church in Jackson. This event is sponsored by the Youth Squad of the Equipping Team of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).



Trent

There is no charge for the conference and no advanced reservations are required.

The meeting will be held from 7-9 p.m. on Feb. 19, and from 8 a.m.-12 noon on Saturday, Feb. 20. Colonial Heights church is located at 5708 Old Canton Road in Jackson.

"When we on the Youth Squad started thinking about how we could impact lives in Mississippi, we thought of parenting," said Mark Lott, youth consultant for the MBCB Sunday School Department and a member of the Equipping Team Youth Squad.

"One of the most needed skills in the state is parenting. We want to meet real needs," Lott added.

Trent has won four Gold Medallion Awards for excellence in Christian writing. Some of the books he has authored and co-authored include, *The Blessing*, *The Two Sides of Love*, *LifeMapping*, *Love for all Seasons*, and *Go the Distance*. He has also written five children's books: *The Treasure Tree*, *There's a Duck in My Closet*, *I'd Choose You!*, *Spider Sisters*, and *The Two Trails*.

After gaining his master's and doctorate degrees from Dallas Theological Seminary, Trent went to Northwest Bible Church in Dallas as their first Minister to Families. There he developed and taught marriage and family enrichment programs.

He then went to Scottsdale Bible Church, Scottsdale, Arizona, to be their first Family Life Pastor. In 1984 he joined Gary Smalley at Today's Family ministries.

Currently, Trent is the president of Encouraging Words, a ministry dedicated to strengthening relationships. He conducts the Loving Relationships for a Lifetime Seminar nationwide and over the past eight years he has presented this message to 85,000 people in over 80 major churches across the United States and Canada. As a main platform speaker at Promise Keeper conferences, he has spoken to over 350,000 men in the past two years. Trent is also a frequent guest of the Focus on the Family and 700 Club radio and television programs.

"John Trent's writing, speaking, and counseling skills make him one of the most

talented men I know," said Gary Smalley, best-selling author and president of Today's Family.

"Over the years he has developed a way to explain relational principles in a language anyone can understand and apply. Everyone who hears John will come away with a deeper understanding of how they can make their relationships more loving," Smalley said.

For more information, contact members of the Equipping Team Youth Squad, Tammy Anderson, Mark Lott, or Don Lum, at the MBCB at P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Judaism bulletin available

A long-awaited Interfaith Witness Belief Bulletin on Judaism is now available from the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB),

Interfaith Witness
BELIEF BULLETIN

according to Ed Deuschle, interfaith witness coordinator in the evangelism department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. "I would encourage extensive use of this new Belief Bulletin on Judaism, as well as the Belief Bulletins on many other religions that are available from NAMB at no charge," Deuschle said. Churches are also permitted to reproduce the four-panel pamphlet in limited quantities for congregational use, he added. The NAMB customer service center can be contacted at (800) 233-1123. For more information on interfaith witness, contact Deuschle at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

HEARING THE CALL

It was a beautiful February morning, and a group of 25-30 had gathered at one of the gates to celebrate the call of God.

Thomas and June Nolen, who have throughout their adult life been involved in missions, were now taking their biggest step in answering the call of God to go and to serve. Thomas and June will be Mississippi's on-site coordinators in our partnership with Ukraine.

The group was not just there to say good-bye, but to celebrate. Friends and family members, young and old, were there — in the Jackson International Airport, we had church!

Thomas and June's pastor, Ken Hester from Mantee, shared a devotional thought telling how Paul had been encouraged along the way and blessed by the people in the churches.

Hester expressed how he had been the recipient of blessings and encouragement and exemplary Christian living from Thomas and June and then in beautiful, pastoral terms



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

he shared his support and love and continuing prayer involvement with them as they go.

It was my blessing to be one of a large circle encompassing Thomas and June as we joined hands and I led in prayer. Then the minister of music from Mantee, Phil Smith, led us in singing.

This circle of mostly non-singers — or maybe a better description would be non-musicians because we nearly all joined and sang, "The Old Rugged Cross," "Amazing Grace," and the contemporary song, "Make Me a Sanctuary."

Strange how the powerful songs of our faith not only

sound different but take on new meaning and have a new brightness in that environment.

No piano or organ but just a small group of people who love the Lord Jesus, singing his praises. An airport terminal became the Holy of Holies.

I would wish for everyone who goes to worship services at church on Sunday that the presence of the Lord would be as special as it was at that place and time.

Afterward, June was giving me some information to take care of some last minute needs. Getting everything together and taking care of all the details had been God-guided

but had not always been easy.

The day before, Thomas and June walked out of the house in which they have lived for 35 years. They sold their home and locked the door for the last time.

Now, it was time to say the good-byes and get on a plane to go to Ukraine, there to do in a new place what they had been doing for so many years in their own community and with their own church — serve the Lord and share the love of Jesus with others.

As I watched this beautiful moment, it occurred to me that believers never have to say a final good-bye.

We come and go but are always connected. How do these moments come about?

For Thomas and June and thousands like them, it is simply a visible expression of an internal experience with Jesus being Lord of life.

It was, as it can be for each of us, a celebration of the Lordship of Jesus who day by day guides us and gives us victory.

Racial reconciliation lagging, speakers say

ATLANTA (BP) — Former U.S. President and Baptist layman Jimmy Carter and Coretta Scott King, wife of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., were among Baptist leaders who called for an end to racial discrimination during the Baptist World Alliance's (BWA) International Summit of Baptists Against Racism Jan. 8-11 in Atlanta.

In a session at the Carter Center, Carter said the dreams of ending racial discrimination "have not been materialized. There have been legal changes, but too much separation of race and no adequate compensation for years of slavery."

Carter is the honorary chairman of the BWA's Special Commission on Baptists Against Racism.

Describing the Christian church as "the last rampart of racism," Carter blamed the continuing racial segregation at the 11 o'clock hour in the United States on the tendency of people to build small communities "and encapsulate ourselves with people like us, and this puts no burden of Christian action on us."

He called for churches to "reach out to a neighboring church that has a different racial and ethnic composition" as a beginning but important step toward better race relations.

To the BWA, Carter said, "...I am pleased that the international community of Baptists has taken such a strong stand against racism. Our Savior Jesus Christ has called us as one people to be equal before God with no room for racial discrimination or prejudice."

In a session at the Morehouse College chapel named after her late husband, Coretta Scott King cited the global effect of her husband's legacy, noting 100 nations now observe the King holiday.

Churches are no longer as segregated as when her late husband declared 11 o'clock, "the most segregated hour in America," she said.

King also noted the apology of the Southern Baptist Convention for the ways Baptists had supported racial discrimination, in a resolution of repentance adopted the convention's 1995 sesquicentennial meeting in Atlanta.

Calling on Baptists to work for an end to violence between people of different faiths, King said, "We have done much, and we have much more to go, but I see the dim outlines of the beloved community" which her husband envisioned.

Wallace Charles Smith, senior minister of Shiloh Church, Washington, D.C., and chair of the BWA special commission, described racism as "a human scourge and pervasive evil that permeates every crack, corner and crevice of the known world."

While many governments and corporations get involved to fight racism, "unless God's people get involved, the problem is not going away," he said.

"God can convert the chilliest, staunchest, and deeply entrenched racist in the world, if we preach the Word of God with power," Smith said.

BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz said in his address, "What God wants is more visionaries, more prophets, and more dreamers to work for racial justice."

Lotz formed the BWA special commission on racism in 1992 out of concern for the escalation of religious tensions in North America and the tide of the racial and ethnic conflict sweeping many parts of the world.

Supported by the weight of civil rights history as 200 delegates from 30 countries met at Ebenezer and Wheat Street Baptist churches and King's alma mater,

Morehouse College, which all played pivotal roles in the fight for civil rights in the United States, Lotz said, "What God needs now is men and women who are open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in their lives, ... ready to go to the walls of injustice and say, 'Enough! Enough! God says it is enough!'"

"I still have a dream," the BWA leader continued, although he warned the world has not dealt kindly with dreamers. Baptists who fight for racial justice and an end to ethnic and tribal conflict might also suffer, he said.

"We honor our martyrs but we kill our prophets, and this is true in Anabaptist and Baptist history," Lotz said.

C.T. Vivian, a civil rights veteran who chairs the Center for Democratic Renewal in Atlanta, also voiced hope in God's power to change people during his address, but said it will not be easy.

"Why are we still dealing with a 16th-century problem at the end of the 20th century?" Vivian asked. "We have not gotten rid of racism within the church and without the culture that surrounds the church. Those who want to help find there is no place to go."

"If you are black, you become a Christian in spite of the Christian faith and culture because of the freedom Baptists gave blacks," Vivian said.

"The black church is now in control of itself, and this was given because we are Baptists. Without this, we never would have this great drive for peace and justice."

Robert E. "Bob" Reccord, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, before leading in prayer for reconciliation in the world, told the summit, "I'm sure glad the Savior who died for me did not give a whit about the color of my skin. It is an honor for me to stand here."



Race Relations Sunday

February 14, 1999

Global challenges of racism recapped by summit

ATLANTA (BP) — The rights of aboriginals in Australia and Native Americans and Hispanics in the United States; concern for refugees and foreigners in the Dominican Republic and Western Europe; and tribal conflicts in Rwanda and northeast India — these were among the challenges linked to racism reviewed during the Baptist World Alliance's International Summit of Baptists Against Racism Jan. 8-11 in Atlanta.

Graham Paulsen, the only ordained aboriginal Baptist pastor in Australia, praised Australian Baptists in his address, noting, "The church has led the way for statements of apology but the government has not followed suit."

While some racial discrimination is based on ignorance and is passed down "from generation to generation," Paulsen also noted the struggles of indigenous peoples in the Pacific are complex because of the various degrees of acculturation by aboriginals and the impact of colonization policies in different countries.

Paulsen noted the Baptist union, for the first time, has allowed him to make a national appeal for support in his ministry to Australian aboriginals. "There is a groundswell of change in attitude in Baptist churches," he said.

Russell Begaye, a Navajo Indian who directs multiethnic church planting initiatives of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, described Native Americans as "among the most abused people in the United States. ... [We] still struggle even though we are the original owners of this land."

The average income of Native Americans ranges from \$5,000 to \$8,000 a year, and there is a 70 to 80% unemployment rate among Native Americans, Begaye said.

"So often, racism rests in the ignorance of history," said Osvaldo L. Mottes, professor of religion and society at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Chicago.

"Hispanics are not newcomers to the United States," said Mottes, who attended Ebenezer Church in Atlanta as a seminary student and saw Martin Luther King Jr.'s mother shot to death as she played the organ in church.

Mottes recounted he "grew up in a minority religious situation in Argentina and when I came to the United States I saw I was now an ethnic minority."

"We were here before the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. ... The roots of Hispanic America are old and deep and not just the recent immigrant wave."

Mottes lamented, "the fact

that over 25 million Hispanics live in urban poverty with poor housing, no employment and lack of food as a permanent underclass is evidence of discrimination."

Anne Wilkinson Hayes, minister of South Oxford Street Church, Oxford, England, who spoke of the discrimination migrant Haitian workers face in the Dominican Republic, said racism is "an evil that damages, demeans and impoverishes brothers and sisters around the world."

She added "it was and still is God's will to reach out to all with his love and grace."

Karl Heinz Walter, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, lamented an anti-refugee and anti-foreigner sentiment now sweeping Western Europe.

"Racism is also

refugees and anti-foreigner attitudes," Walter noted, adding "hunger and cold" among refugees "is a big problem in Europe."

BWA summit adopts covenant

ATLANTA (BP)—An "Atlanta Covenant" — urging Baptists around the world to devote the first 10 years of the new millennium to eradicating racism and ethnic conflict — was adopted by 200 delegates from 30 countries who participated in the Baptist World Alliance's (BWA) Baptists Against Racism Summit Jan. 8-11 in Atlanta.

A copy of the covenant's exact wording was not available from the BWA Jan. 14. The BWA issued a news release, however, summarizing the covenant.

The BWA is a fellowship of 192 Baptist conventions and unions, including the Southern Baptist Convention, ministering in 200 countries.

According to the BWA news release, the covenant notes that while Baptists have "a rich heritage of commitment to international mission" and have made significant contributions in areas of health care, education and church planting, "racism has tainted these efforts."

Urging Baptists to be "agents of reconciliation," the news release reported, the covenant specifically calls Baptists:

- ♦ to examine ways in which their "evangelism, Christian education and economic structures perpetuate racism, and work aggressively for change."
- ♦ to "a renewal of worship and cleansing from racial sin" in Baptist churches "and a commitment to wholistic and interracial mission and evangelism."
- ♦ "to work for the elimination of unfair trade and [for] a just world economy, the protection of the rights of aboriginal and tribal peoples and to study the affirmation of the relationship between gospel and culture."
- ♦ to repent "in churches, especially in North America and Europe, where worship is largely still segregated."
- ♦ to commit to "racial justice as an integral part of proclaiming Good News; [to] promote economic development as a way forward to racial justice; use multi-racial images and idioms in worship; and develop church educational programs that promote a Christian lifestyle that demonstrates justice and racial harmony."
- ♦ to move "towards a mission policy that empowers all Baptists to evangelize and disciple all people groups around the world."

NAMES IN THE NEWS



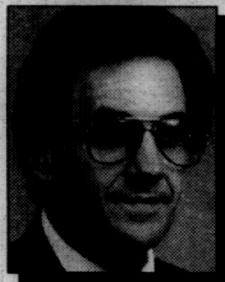
Birmingham Ridge Church, Saltillo, ordained Reggie Bridges to the ministry on Jan. 10. Bridges has been called to serve Canaan Church, Benton County. He is a student at Blue Mountain College. Pictured with Bridges is Bob Holland, pastor.

Bill Spruell received a certificate at Wade Church, Pascagoula, for 50 years perfect attendance in Sunday School. Spruell was an active member at East Moss Point Church and Griffin Street Church, Moss Point, and has been a member of Wade Church for three years. Pictured are Richard Bradshaw, superintendent of Sunday School, and Spruell.



Bradshaw and Spruell

Richard (Ricky) White has retired from 30 years of pastoring to enter into evangelism. A native of Alabama, he is a graduate of William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. White is available for revivals, Bible studies, and pulpit supply. He may be reached by writing him at 19565 Oak Cir., Seminole, AL 36574 or calling (334) 946-2371.



White



Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto, held deacon ordination services on Jan. 24 for Earl Moak and Derek Crosby. Pictured (from left) are Danny Chisholm, pastor; Moak; Crosby; and Tommy Sasser, chairman of deacons.

Jack Gregory has announced his retirement as of March 7. At present he is the pastor of Carey Chapel Church, Marshall Association. He will be available for pulpit supply, interim pastorates, or revivals. His new address will be 200 Woodgreen Drive, Apt. 7, Madison, MS 39110.



Gregory

Polly Love Morris, 80, emeritus Southern Baptist missionary to China, Thailand, and Hong Kong, died Jan. 23. A native of Hattiesburg, Morris and her husband, J. Glenn Morris of Atlanta, were appointed in 1946. She served as a church and home worker in Tsingtao and Shanghai. The couple transferred to Thailand in 1952 after working 15 months under Communist rule in China. In Thailand she established the Baptist Book Store and also worked with refugees in transit centers. The couple transferred to Hong Kong in 1983. Morris was a graduate of Mississippi Woman's College (now William Carey College) and the Carver School of Missions and Social Work in Louisville, Ky. She is survived by her husband; one son, J. Glenn Morris Jr. of Baltimore, Md.; and three grandchildren.



Hester

Kenneth R. Hester recently received a doctor of ministry degree from Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, Ala. Hester is pastor of Mantee Church.



Port Gibson Church, Port Gibson, held a deacon ordination service on Jan. 24 for Monette Greer. Members of the deacon board pictured with Greer are (front row, from left) Doug Patrick, Sim Dulaney, Malcolm Montgomery, Greer, Hulon McLeod, Robert Parman, and Charles Dobbs; (second row) Jim Redden, Michael Ellis (chairman of deacons), Charles D. Terrell, pastor, and Ronnie Hynum.

James E. Watts retired from Branch Church, Morton, on Dec. 31. He is available for supply, interim, or revivals. Watts can be contacted at 1223 Kracker Station Rd., Morton, MS 39117 or call (601) 732-2918.



Watts

Are your seniors tired of crawling over the HUMP? The solution is a 15-passenger van with an aisle, raised roof & electric step.

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BUSES! VANS! PEOPLE MOVERS!



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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

February 11, 1999

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

Smaller Church Sunday School and Discipleship Training



Leadership Training Conferences

March 22, 1999 • 7-9 p.m.

First Baptist Church, Columbia

Morgantown Baptist Church, Natchez

The Sunday School Department and Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board have teamed up to provide this unique training event designed with the smaller church in mind. Each age group conference will provide an opportunity to learn more about teaching and learning styles of those involved in their area of ministry. This year we have one great conference in two outstanding locations. No registration is required.

For more information, contact

Sunday School Department & Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
PO Box 530 Jackson MS 39205, 1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 local

www.mbc.org/ss

GULFSHORE YOUTH WEEKS '99

Retro Revolution

timeless truths for a new generation

May 31-June 25, 1999 • Gulfshore Baptist Assembly • Pass Christian, Miss.

CAMP DATE	CAMP PASTOR	CAMP MUSICIAN
May 31-June 4	Rob Boyd FBC, Clinton	Kevin Williams Clinton
June 4-8	Greg Warnock FBC, Brookhaven	Stacy Andrews Goodman
June 8-12	Ken Hester Mantee BC, Mantee	Stacy Andrews Goodman
June 12-16	Jon Daniels FBC, Jackson	Kevin Williams Clinton
June 17-21	Jason Bird 15th Avenue BC, Meridian	Kevin Williams Clinton
June 21-25	Gary Permenter Mt. Vernon BC, Columbus	Kevin Williams Clinton

Gulfshore Youth Weeks are an affordable alternative for your youth group. Program fees, meals and accommodations total just \$134 per camper. Registration for Mississippi churches begins March 1, 1999, and April 15, 1999, for out-of-state churches.

For more information...

Gulfshore Youth Weeks program information:
Jim Didlake or Mark Lott at (601) 968-3800.

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly reservation information:
Frank Simmons at (228) 452-7261.

Gulfshore Youth Weeks faculty information and applications:
Reid Vance at (504) 286-3501.

TOWARD A GROWING MARRIAGE

A Biblical, Practical Marriage Seminar

Main Street BC, Hattiesburg, March 12-13



Gary Chapman

Noted author of:

The Five Love Languages, The Five Love Languages of Children, and The Five Signs of a Functional Family

Seven High Energy Sessions with Gary Chapman

- Humorous - How to communicate in the midst of conflict
- Challenging - How to avoid financial bondage
- Exciting - How to make sex mutually fulfilling
- Relevant - How to rekindle love

Seminar Cost:	Individual	Couple
Early Registration by Feb. 19	\$35	\$65
Group Rates:		
10 couples		\$60
15 couples		\$55
20 couples		\$50
Registration	\$45	\$75

For more information or to register call:

1-800-254-2022

Cross-Country Training for the 21st Century

'99 State Singles Retreat

May 29-31, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

Pass Christian (228-452-7261) • Visa cards accepted



Special Guest
J.J. Jasper
Disc Jockey for
American Family
Radio, Tupelo

Special Guest
David Adams
Minister with Singles
Olive BC
Pensacola, Fla.



Training Sessions

"Spiritual Warfare Track," "Single Parenting," "Games for Singles," "Drama and Clowning," "Singles Guide to Building Wealth," "Humor Is the Best Medicine," "Prayerlife," "Building Relationships"

Activities

New Orleans Trip, Swamp Trip, Mission Adventures Training Trip
Coastal Trip, Canoe Trip, Other Opportunities

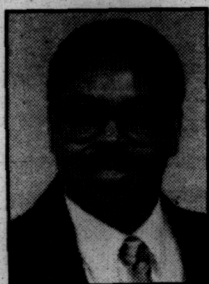
Call MBCB Discipleship & Family Ministry for more info:
501)968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

Senior Adult Rally (African American/Anglo)

Thursday, March 25
Pearl River Baptist Association

I-59S, McNeil-Steep Hollow Rd (east) exit, Carriere, MS

8:30 a.m. Registration (no cost)
9:00 a.m. Rally
Devotion by Richard Brogan, MBCB
Storytelling by Gwen Williams (Miss Chocolate)
New Orleans
10:00 Break (hosted by Miss. Baptist Foundation)
10:30 Senior Adult Choir, FBC, Gulfport
Rossie Francis, pastor Grace Temple BC,
Gulfport
11:45 Closing Prayer by Glenn Shows, MBCB



Rossie Francis

(Call 601-798-2372)

Notice: Handouts, refreshments, fun and "no cost"

MISSISSIPPI'S GROWING DISCIPLES SEMINAR

Evangelism

Mentoring

Families

in disciple making

CHURCHES



Monday and Tuesday, April 26 and 27

First Baptist Church

Ridgeland, MS 39157

(601)856-6139

Program Personalities



Bill Mitchell

Author of "Building
Strong Families"

Bill Easum

Author of "Growing
Spiritual Redwoods," and
"Sacred Cows Make
Gourmet Burgers: Turning
Members into Ministers."



Bill Faye

Author of "Share
Jesus Without Fear"

Bob Biehl

Author of "Mentoring,"
and "Wisdom for Men."



Registration

Growing Disciples Seminar

Name _____
Church _____
Church Address _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Contact Person's E-mail Address _____
Total Number of People Coming from Your Church _____

Early Bird Prices: 2 days \$30, 1 day \$20. If registering after March 26, please add \$5 for late registration. Early Bird cut-off: March 26.

Ministers bringing three or more can register themselves free!

Choose your plan:

Early Bird, by March 26 (Total enclosed \$ _____)

_____ Day One _____ Day Two _____ Day One and Two

Late, after March 26 (Total enclosed \$ _____)

_____ Day One _____ Day Two _____ Day One and Two

_____ I am a minister bringing three or more, so there is no charge for me.

Mail to: MBCB, Discipleship & Family Ministry Dept.,
PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

For more info call: (601)968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651



People
Reach
Expo

February 27, 1999, 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Jim Buck Ross Agriculture
& Forestry Museum, Jackson

Purpose: To motivate and provide churches and church leaders with practical ideas on how to reach their community.

Audience : Key Church Leadership

Keynote Speakers: Fred Luter, Jr. and
Thom S. Ranier

9:30 a.m. General Session with Thom Ranier
11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Series of 30 minute mini-conferences
1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Closing General Session with Fred Luter

People Reach Expo Registration

The first 300 who pre-register by February 17 will receive a complimentary ticket to the Agricultural Museum and lunch. Churches must make the reservations for their participants in writing - no phone requests, please.

Name of Church _____ Phone Number _____
Complete Address _____

Contact Person _____ Phone Number _____
Contact Person's E-mail Address _____

Total Number of People Coming from Your Church _____

Mail to: MBCB, Sunday School Dept., PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530
For more info call: (601)968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

March 23, 1999 • Baptist Building, Jackson • 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



LEADER:

Joe Stacker, Pastor of Belmont Heights BC in Nashville and former director of Church Administration Department of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

PURPOSE:

This conference will examine the meaning of Christian leadership with a view to the next millennium. Primary emphasis will be given to the leadership style and example modeled by Jesus Christ. Other leadership styles, perceptions of leadership, contemporary models, attitudes on leadership and changes in local church ministry affecting leadership will also be examined. Idea storming and dialogue about effective ministry leadership for church health in the 21st century will be involved in this conference.

Leadership for the 21st Century - Registration Form

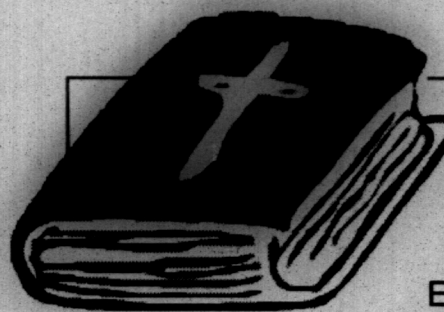
There is no cost for this conference. Lunch will either be on your own or ordered at the registration time at \$7 per person.

Name _____ Church _____
Address _____ Association _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please clip and return to: Matt Buckles, CAPM Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, Ms 39205-0530.

"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"

PREREGISTRATION: Requested by March 19, 1999



YOUTH BIBLE STUDY FORUM

Saturday, March 6, 1999
Emmanuel Baptist Church,
Grenada, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

What are your youth saying about Sunday School? We want to hear from them!

Bring FOUR of your youth to this unique Forum and give them an opportunity to share. We hope you will bring a mixture of older youth and younger youth, and a mixture of male and female. Also, consider including two active youth and two who are only "fringe-ly" active. The reason for only four from each church has to do with our desired purpose. We want to generate meaningful, honest, open and "serious" discussion. The smaller the number, we feel, the easier this will be to accomplish.

There is no charge to participate in this Forum. However, we do ask that you pre-register with the Sunday School Department.

Call Mark Lott to get more information
(1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800, ext. 295)

GA/Acteens Campus Days

Mississippi College

February 20, 1999

9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

\$7.50 each

- Missionaries • Basketball
- Testimonies • Cheerleaders
- Music

Deadline to register is Feb. 15

Please send number of
participants & check to:

WMU

PO Box 530

Jackson, MS 39205-0530

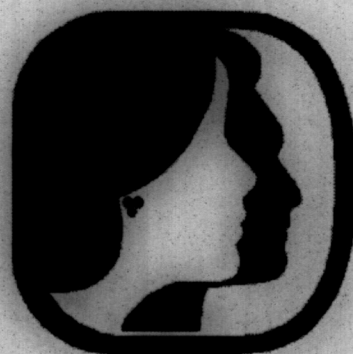
or call (601)968-3800 or
1-800-748-1651 for more details

Connecting with the Future Conference

Saturday, February 13, 1999, 8:30 a.m.- noon, FBC Madison *Introducing new focus age groups in preschool curriculum. New focus age groups are designed to meet the needs, avenues of learning and characteristics of today's preschoolers.*

Conferences offered: Professionals/Division Directors, Babies, Ones-Twos, Threes-Pre-K, Kindergarten, Sunday School Preschool Curriculum.

Contact the Sunday School Dept. for more info: 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651



PARENTING TEENAGES IN 2000

Friday, February 19, 7-9 p.m.

Saturday, February 20, 8 a.m. - noon

Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Jackson

John Trent, Speaker

Trent will help equip parents for the challenge of building healthy, positive relationships with teenagers. Gifted with the ability to bring joy to your heart and a smile to your face, Trent will share an insightful blend of biblical truth and workable wisdom in a language anyone can understand and apply.

Trent is currently president of ENCOURAGING WORDS, a ministry dedicated to strengthening relationships, especially those related to the family. He is the author or co-author of numerous books, including *The Blessing*, *The Two Sides of Love*, and *Life Mapping*. Previously, Trent was associated with Gary Smalley's ministry, Today's Family. Trent is a frequent guest of Focus on the Family and 700 Club Radio and Television programs.

For more info, contact Don Lum, Tammy Anderson,
or Mark Lott at 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651.

Pray this day for...

February 12- 25, 1999

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

Prayer a Mutual Experience - God intends for prayer to be a mutual experience, but most of us regard it as one-way communication. We often share our thoughts and concerns without regard for what God wants to say to us. However, prayer is to be both talking and listening. God desires to talk to us but too often God speaks to us and there is no response.

Prayer for Revival and Spiritual Awakening Seminar Manual" NAMB of the SBC

For WMU Focus Week, Baptist representative Connie Robbins, who serves in far eastern Russia, is beginning a new women's Bible Study in Aviagorodok for non-believers. Pray that the Holy Spirit will draw many women to the group, and ask Him to work in their hearts, convicting them and bringing them to salvation.

Jim Arrant, a church planter missionary in Schenectady, NY, asks prayer for Crossroads BC. Members have an opportunity to purchase the building in which they are meeting, but need the funds. Pray for a full-time college ministry for them. There are 15-19 campuses (87,000 students) in the assoc., five or more are close to the church.

Pray for the Shabwalala Baptist Church, which is located out in the bush, west of Lusaka, Zambia. When ISC worker Kevin Rodgers preached there in mid January, out of about 90 in attendance, 32 people accepted Christ. Pray that these new believers will remain strong in their relationship with the Lord and that they will be disciplined.

Please pray for continued church growth in the number of new churches in Algeria. Just a few years ago, in one region in Algeria the number of churches could be counted on one hand. Today, the existing churches are growing and new congregations are sprouting up in many villages. Pray that each village will have a church.

For Growth Spiral Conference, Baptist Building, sponsored by the Sunday School Dept. Pray that missionary Nancy Carpenter will receive governmental authorization to do medical work among the Mahi of Benin, which is very much needed.

An earthquake that is believed to be the worst in Colombia's history struck on Jan. 25 near the city of Armenia. Southern Baptist missionaries are trying to give help in the affected areas. Pray for the thousands of Colombians who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Pray that through this tragedy, they will turn to the Lord and find His comfort.

Randy Cowling is the DOM for Kaw Valley Assn., Topeka, KS. Pray for four church starts. Two are in Lawrence, one in Topeka, and one in Hiawatha. The one in Hiawatha is a Native American work, which includes ministry to three Indian-owned casinos.

The newest missionaries to arrive in the Dominican Republic, Butch and Shanda Pierce, are now in their "second level" of language learning. Ask God to lead them to someone who can help them with their continued language learning. Pray that God will direct them to the area of the country where He would have them serve.

For Reconciliation Workshop, Baptist Building, sponsored by Missions Extension & Associational Administration. For Church Music Conference, FBC, Pascagoula, sponsored by the Church Music Dept.

For Directors of Missions Interpretation Conference, Camp Garaywa, sponsored by Missions Extension & Associational Administration.

For African American Church Leadership Institute; Grace Temple BC, Gulfport, sponsored by Missions Extension & Associational Administration. For State Singles Rally, Barnes Crossing Mall, Tupelo, sponsored by Discipleship & Family Ministry.

For Preschool Curriculum Overview, FBC, Madison, sponsored by the Sunday School Dept. Pray for the planned opening of new work in the town of Hijuelas, Chile. It is located in the areas of Chile known as the Fifth Region.

For Parenting Teenagers in 2000, Colonial Hgts. BC, Jackson, sponsored by the Equipping Team. For Churchmen Retreat, Gulfshore Assembly, sponsored by the Church Music Dept.

For Campus Day, Mississippi College, sponsored by the WMU. Pray for the violence-torn country of South Africa. Political unrest has resulted in a massacre of 11 people this past weekend. Pray for the South African people and the missionaries serving there.

Reconciliation Workshop

February 18
Skyroom
Baptist Building
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.



Jim Booth

"Cultural Awareness"

Develop an understanding of the different cultures in Mississippi.

Led by Jim Booth, Consultant, Missions Extension and Associational Administration, MBCB.



Beth Holmes



Paul Jones

"The Bible and Race"

Discuss various scriptures on how God deals with people and how they came to write an information booklet with this name.

Led by Paul Jones, executive director, Christian Action Commission, and Beth Holmes, Consultant, Christian Action Commission.



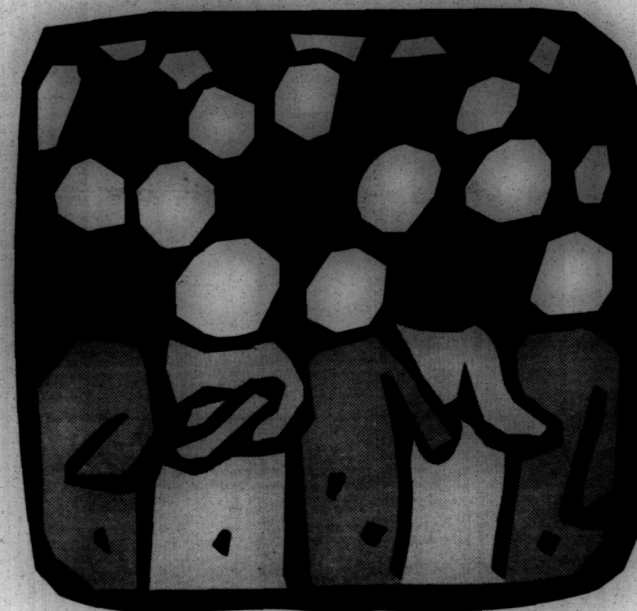
Rossie Francis



Bill Smith

"What I Am Learning About Reconciliation"

Led by Rossie Francis, pastor, Grace Temple BC, Gulfport, and Bill Smith, director of missions, Lee Baptist Association.



Lunch will be provided.
Please call for reservation.
1-800-748-1651 or 292-3361
Ask for Elaine.

A Ministry of the Cooperative Program
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Missions Extension and Associational
Administration
Don Q. Wilson, Director
Richard Brogan, Consultant

JUST FOR THE RECORD



The Vascular Laboratory at Baptist Medical Center, Jackson, recently received its accreditation from the Intersocial Commission for the Accreditation of Vascular Laboratories. The lab is among the first 975 vascular labs in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico to be granted accreditation by the organization. Members of the Vascular Lab team include (pictured) Minnie Bibb, Brenda Foster, Charles O'Mara, Arlene Speights, and Jana Patton.

Clarke County Association

recently paid tribute to Karen "Crickett" Parks Kennedy, associational secretary, on the occasion of her retirement celebration. The tribute was given by Grady Crowell, director of missions, on Jan. 8 at the Clarke Baptist Center. Kennedy served as secretary from January, 1979 through Dec. 31, 1998.



Kennedy and Crowell

Men's Annual Wild Game

Supper will be held at First Church, Laurel, on Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. The special guest will be Barry Landrum of Houston, Texas. For more information, call the church at (601) 649-5710.

Southern Gospel with Thorn Hill Church and

Obadiah will take place on Feb. 21 at 6 p.m. The church is located south of Pelahatchie.

Fellowship Church, Mathiston, will sponsor a youth rally, Witnessing Begins by Chatting, 6-9 p.m., on Feb. 20 at the Woodmen of the World building located on Hwy 15 between Ackerman and Mathiston. The schedule includes Kevin Michael Williams, worship leader; Michael Gray, ventriloquist; and Westley Hughes, speaker. For more information, contact Suzanne Bennett, (601) 263-5934, Gina Sanderson, 263-4259 or Jean Reaves at 263-4035.

Hickory Ridge Church, Rankin Association, celebrates its 100th anniversary. "It was on Feb. 11, 1899, when 60 people asked to be granted letters from Steen's Creek Church, (now First Church, Florence) for the purpose of organizing a church at Hickory Ridge," said Dale Holloway, interim pastor. Activities will include Feb. 21, Winter, earliest beginnings, 1899-1929; May 2, Spring, lift from depression, 1930-1940; July 4, Summer, from fear to freedom; and Oct. 17, Fall, gathering the harvest, 1953-1999. On Feb. 21, 10 a.m.-12 noon, the church will gather for Old Timer's Day and dinner on the grounds.

Heaven's Gates & Hell's Flames will be presented at Calvary Church, Belzoni, at 6 p.m. on Feb. 21 and 7 p.m. on Feb. 22 and 23. For more information, call (601) 247-4443.

Dedication services will be held for Iglesia el Buen Pastor Feb. 14 at 2 p.m., 609 Pine Street in Forest. Jose Lopez is pastor of Iglesia el Buen Pastor and David Sartin pastors the mother church Sebastopol Church in Scott County.



Gracewood Church, Olive Branch, will host Elizabeth Montgomery, recording artist from Nashville, Tenn., in concert on Feb. 14 at 10:30 a.m. She will be appearing at the church as a part of the national sexual abstinence campaign for young people, True Love Waits. For more information, contact Larry R. Wimberly, minister of music and youth, at (601) 895-4714 (home) or 393-2549 (office).

RA and GAs at Corinth Church, Magee, pictured on the Christmas float are (from left) Adam Blair, Gabriel Alvarey, Holly Kennedy, Robin Kennedy, Robert Stewart, Matthew Hankins, and Tyler Williamson. Leaders are Kenny Stewart, Larry Bynum, Calvin Blair, and Willie Johns. Dean Stewart is pastor.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

SEEKING PASTOR, seminary degree preferred. Send resume to Brookway Baptist Church, 300 Hartman Street, Brookhaven, MS 39601.

A SMALL BUT DYNAMIC SBC CHURCH in the Raymond area is seeking someone who is Bi-vocational or a student to lead in the development of ministries in music, youth and children. Strong lay leadership will assist. The church has a wonderful and loving fellowship which is centered in strong Bible teaching. Please call: 857-3138 or 885-2002.

CLASSIFIED ADS

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Members of the history committee at First Church, Kosciusko, are shown during a signing of the newly published "History of First Baptist Church." Pictured, (seated, from left) are George Ellen Chandler, Drew Chandler, Sherrie Cheek, Anne Porter; (standing) Jo Ann Mikell, Nancy Green, and Margaret White. Awaiting autographs are Ellen Pettit (left) and Ellen Scarborough. Barry Corbett is pastor. The book is made available at the price of \$24, and may be ordered by writing to First Baptist Church, P O Box 70, Kosciusko, MS 39090. For more information, call (601) 289-5575.

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Ethiopian shares Gospel inside prison cell

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP) — Berhanu Kebede's faith in Christ has come with a price. "Even if I had to give my life," Kebede says, "God gave me his Son. What I gave was so little compared to that."

Kebede works with Southern Baptist representatives in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as they help nationals preach the gospel in the Red Zone, an area in the heart of the city with a million people and only six churches.

In his youth, Kebede had been a world-class soccer player. Like several of his friends, he was headed for a spot on the national team.

Kebede, who was 15 at the time, began taking some of the players from the soccer team to his church. Since these were nationally known players, this angered the government's communist regime and the opposing party so much that both began trying to kill him.

His parents feared they would be in danger if he stayed with them, so they asked him to leave the house. He began going

from home to home, staying with relatives.

When Kebede was 16, police officers arrested him as he was walking out of church. For the next two years he was in and out of custody.

The cells in Ethiopian prisons were packed so tight that prisoners had to take turns sleeping. Prisoners were allowed to use the toilet only once every 24 hours. If they needed to go more often, they had to use plastic containers hanging on the wall.

"The smell was almost suffocating," Kebede recalls. "You were packed in so tightly with everyone else. Sometimes they couldn't wash themselves and they'd

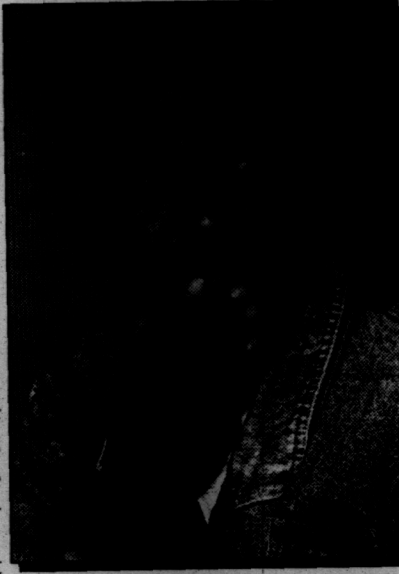
use the bathroom in the cell. It was really bad."

In the midst of the horrible conditions, Kebede found ways to share the hope he discovered in Christ.

"Sometimes they would put us in with thieves and murderers," he said. "We had a chance to witness to them. Some of them never would have gone to hear an evangelist. God really changed many of their lives."

Kebede counts himself blessed after what God has brought him through.

"For me to have just survived this long means a lot," he says. "Praise the Lord, things are good. If you are a human, you need lots of things, but at least I have enough to eat and place to sleep. God has been good to me."



Kebede

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS



Blue Mountain students

Students of Blue Mountain College were on a cultural student exchange program to Linyi, China, during the Christmas holidays. Students (pictured from left) are Anna Teel, Red Banks; Leslie Durham, Collierville, Tenn.; Donna Hall, group leader from Paris, Texas; Jennifer Edwards, Collierville, Tenn.; and (back row, fourth to right) Becky Harris, Shannon.

Mississippi College (MC) Chamber Choir, under the direction of Richard Joiner, will present its Mid-winter Concert in Provine Chapel on Feb. 16 at 8:15 p.m. Special guests will be the Mississippi Children's Choir under the direction of Joanna Hunt. The mass movements being performed have been recently composed by MC composition majors Andy Albritton, Lake Village, Ark.; David Nieminin, Clinton; and Thomas Slawson, Picayune.

Mississippi College (MC) hosted the 25th annual Mississippi Science and Mathematics Tournament on Feb. 4 and 5. Approximately 1,600 students convened on campus for the event. Sponsored by the departments of biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and computer science at MC, the tournament recognized students and their high schools for outstanding achievement in these fields of study.

STAFF CHANGES

Tim Alexander has accepted the call of minister of education at Harrisburg Church, Tupelo. Originally from Houston, Alexander attended Blue Mountain College, Southwestern Seminary, and has served

churches in Mississippi, Texas, and Tennessee. He previously served for five years at Valley Grove Church, Knoxville, Tenn.

Lawn Haven Church, Laurel, has called David MacIsaac to serve as pastor. MacIsaac received his education at Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville, Fla., Mobile College, Mobile, Ala., and New Orleans Seminary. He served for seven years at First Church, Buckatunna. Other churches he served in Mississippi were Good Hope, Richton; Pine Level, Leakesville; and Pleasant Hill.

REVIVAL DATES

Bay Vista, Biloxi: Feb. 21-24; Wayne Dubose, Baton Rouge, La., evangelist; Scott Lee, Marietta, Ga., music; Jerry Watts, pastor.

Lynn Ray Road, Petal: Feb. 14-17; Michael Mason, Decatur, Ala., evangelist; Freddie Odom, Hattiesburg, music.



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Miss. Baptist Foundation sees 22% increase

JACKSON, MS (Special) — The participant's fund of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation (MBF) increased 22% during the last fiscal year and now totals \$48,070,484, MBF trustees learned during their December 1998 board meeting at the Baptist Building in Jackson.

MBF executive director Hal

Fisher also reported 47 new accounts were opened during the last fiscal year, which ended June 30, 1998. Fisher said the Foundation currently manages 923 trusts, and \$1,869,216 was distributed to Baptist ministries during the last fiscal year.

"Each of these accounts represents an individual or family

who wanted to make a difference for the cause of Christ, even after their death. These gifts will continue to work until the Lord comes again," Fisher said.

As the trust agency of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, MBF promotes Christian estate stewardship; receives, invests, and manages

endowment gifts; and distributes earnings to Baptist ministries as specified by donors. MBF also serves as a money manager for Baptist churches, institutions, and agencies.

As an agency of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC), MBF is directed by a board of trustees elected by messengers to the MBC annual meeting. MBF reports to the convention and is funded by a Mississippi Cooperative Program allocation.

In addition to Fisher, MBF is staffed by associate director Jane Newell, accountant Jerry Thornhill, and administrative assistant Pat Hutton.

MBF trustees present at the December 1998 board meeting, followed by their church membership, were (back row, from left): board treasurer Barry Hardy, Broadmoor Church, Jackson; Ed Jones, First Church, Pascagoula; Kearney Travis, First Church, Hattiesburg; board vice president Ron Logan, Ridgecrest Church, Madison; (front row, from left) Norris Stampley, Alta Woods Church, Jackson; board secretary Joe Gary, First Church, Tupelo; Robert Maddux, First Church, Coldwater; and board president Robert Ross, First Church, Columbus.

SWBTS names Kline as leadership director

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — A longtime staff member of LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tenn., has been named the first-ever director of leadership development at Southwestern Seminary.

Keith A. Kline joined the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary's staff Feb. 1. Kline was manager of the adult Sunday School services section in LifeWay's Sunday School division.

Kline will design and direct Southwestern's leadership development strategy and will direct the seminary's new Ralph M. Smith Leadership Development Complex. The first phase of the \$21-million facility is scheduled for completion this summer.



Why are teenagers so disrespectful? Don't they realize the sacrifices that have been made to get them to where they are?

Teenagers who are disrespectful and don't realize the sacrifices that have been made because they have never been told, "No!" In our affluent society, young people have been given whatever their hearts desire, and if it is abused or broken it is replaced without consequences. They have not been taught to appreciate the hard work that others put into obtaining material goods for them. In addition, our culture has taught them contempt for authority. Watch and listen to the pervasive entertainment media (TV, movies, pop music, etc.), and try to find situations where authentic respect and appreciation is encouraged. Children must be taught from an early age that their lifestyle doesn't come free, and that the entertainment media paint a warped picture of life. They must be taught the hard reality that instant gratification doesn't

always work out, and that "Good things come to those who wait."

My first grader has asked to go to school friends' homes to play. Since I don't know every family in her large class, how should I handle this?

Take time from your busy schedule to get to know these families. You can do this by attending PTA meetings and introducing yourself to them. You can invite them to lunch or, initially, just to ride together to the next PTA meeting. When you attend school programs, ask your child to point out her friends and then approach those moms and dads. Have your child invite friends to play, and ask the parents to stay for a little while when they drop off their child. If several of the families lives in your neighborhood, there's the possibility of car pools and block parties. You are to be commended for addressing this very real concern, and be assured that your child is taking note of your sincere interest in his/her world.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

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Ag Missions Foundation sets annual meet

The Agricultural Missions Foundation (AMF) will hold its annual meeting at First Church, Belzoni, on Feb. 20 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Sam Harper, a veterinarian and missionary to the South American country of Peru, will be the keynote speaker. Harper utilizes a mobile clinic in his travels to Peruvian villages, where he conducts veterinary health and evangelistic campaigns.

About 40% of the Peruvian population is involved in agricultural endeavors that involve large numbers of farm animals for which Harper provides

care, according to an AMF statement.

AMF program coordinator Harold R. Watson of Terry, former agricultural missionary in the Philippines, will present opportunities for providing assistance to areas of Honduras and Nicaragua devastated last year by Hurricane Mitch.

Plans are being made by AMF to survey destroyed family farms in the two countries and provide technical assistance in restarting those farms, includ-

ing the donation of high-quality seeds for the first new crop.

Watson said several important business matters will also be considered, and a complimentary catfish lunch will be provided during a fellowship time at noon.

"Pastors in the Delta area are especially invited to attend this meeting. This is an opportunity to learn about AMF as well as the assistance we are planning for the areas in Central America where farmers have lost everything," Watson said.

For more information on AMF or the annual meeting, contact Watson at 1153 Owens Road, Terry, MS 39170. Telephone: (601) 857-8544.

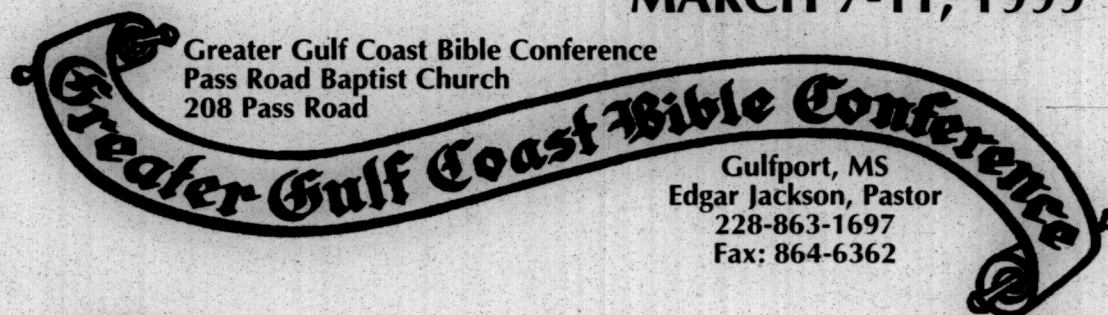


Harper

Musical tour deadline approaching

The deadline is approaching for signing up for the July 29-Aug. 10 "God With Us" musical tour of England, Scotland, and Wales being organized by Covenant Ministries International, Inc., in Clinton. Covenant president Brian Pannell said Tommy Sparkman, minister of music at Parkway Church, Clinton, will serve as choir director for the trip, while L. Graham Smith, director of the church music department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will be the worship leader. Estimated cost of the trip is \$1,600-\$2,100 per person. For more information, contact Pannell at 1102 Laurelwood Drive, Clinton, MS 39056, or e-mail at covenant@misnet.com.

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EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Ultimate comeback

Mark 13:1-37

By Dee McDermitt

This chapter is commonly called the Olivet Discourse, since Jesus delivered it while sitting on the Mount of Olives looking out over the city of Jerusalem. It is also known as the "little Apocalypse," being prophetic material which is expanded in Revelation. It was intended to forewarn the disciples about four spiritual dangers: relying on outward symbols of religion, deception by false prophets, distraction by turmoil in the world, and falling away because of persecutions that come against faith. The disciples may have been troubled by his words and

actions of the previous days, and four of them come to him with questions on behalf of the twelve.

Questions about the Temple's fall (vv. 2-4) Jesus warned his disciples of the time when all the familiar religious symbols would be taken away. The temple was a major symbol for these men. Nothing could match its splendor and seeming infallibility. Even though it had been built by the hated Herod, it was one of the architectural wonders of the Roman world. Some of the stones were forty feet long and eighteen feet high. As permanent as the temple seemed, it would fall. When



McDermitt

this much-loved structure was gone, there was no danger of the infant church going back into the comfortable practices of Judaism because there was nothing left. Without a temple, there could be no sacrifice.

Predictions of future troubles (vv. 5-8) The disciples then questioned him about when these things would happen and what would be the sign. For centuries men have asked this. Jesus makes it clear that if you focus on "when", you could be deceived. Jesus does not answer this question immediately but leaves it until the end. To get a full picture here, read Matthew 24 and 25 and Luke 21. Each writer emphasizes certain things. Matthew majors on what happens to the Jews. Luke tells of the fall of Jerusalem, but Mark warns of the danger to faith

which will follow. So Jesus begins and ends with the message to guard against being deceived by "take heed" (keep awake) and "watch" (don't fall asleep). He warns them of false prophets claiming to be him, wars, earthquakes, and famines. These are all threats to faith. We are not to be alarmed as are non-Christians, however, because these things are necessary; they are merely the "labor pains" which the world will experience before the establishment of God's kingdom.

The coming of the Son of Man (vv. 24-27) Then Jesus shares with them the exciting climax of history — when he will appear in the clouds with great power and glory. The solar system will be changed and the heavens will be shaken. From other passages, we see that this will have a tremendous effect on the earth. Tidal waves will occur and volcanoes will erupt. He

will send his angels to the four corners of the earth to gather the "elect," the chosen ones.

The time of his coming unknown (vv. 32, 35-37) At last Jesus goes back to the original question of when this would happen. The fact is no one knows, not even him. This shows his humanity. He laid aside his Deity to come to earth and did not exercise it while he was with us. He was a man like us with limited knowledge and the Father had not told him this. Then he divides the interval between his first and second comings into one long night of four watches: evening, midnight, cock crow, and morning. He gives the command to watch or to be alert for the temptations and persecutions which will surely come so that nothing will keep us from our losing our faith in God.

McDermitt is a member of Rawls Springs Church, Hattiesburg.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Examine yourself

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

By Carl M. White

Almost all Christian groups observe the Lord's Supper. Though called by different names and assigned different meanings, it is a key ritual of all Christianity. It may be a surprise to modern day Baptists, but in the early church it was observed frequently (maybe every time they worshiped) and was often part of an entire fellowship meal. It was and remains a sacred act of worship, rich with meaning.

Yet, as rich and sacred as the Lord's Supper is, it can be misused and abused. The Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, writes words of instruction to the early church and to us so that we might keep this blessed meal sacred until Christ returns.

An evaluation (vv. 20-22). Though the gathering of the church together for the Lord's Supper often involved a meal, it was a serious time of worship. It involved more than just a thimble of juice and a chicklet of bread. The regularity of it and the volume was in danger of transforming it into something other than a worship experience. Thus, Paul's outburst in verse 22: "Do you not have houses in which to eat or drink?"

In today's Baptist church the fellowship supper has taken on a life of its own. Have a revival service and the crowds will be slim. Have a fish fry and you can pack out the fellowship hall. Where are our priorities?



White

While Paul's evaluation was directly about the Lord's Supper, its application to us is more about our general worship habits. There is a self-centeredness about our worship patterns that is unbecoming to the Lord we worship. We treat worship with

about as much deference as choosing lunch from a menu. It is entirely up to personal preference and appetite. This is not how it should be, and the recollection of the meanings behind the Lord's Supper can help us keep our priorities.

A recollection (vv. 23-26). Note Paul's claim in vs. 23, that he received this from the Lord. His meaning is not entirely clear. Is Paul claiming to have spent time with the Lord gaining this knowledge? Or is it a way of saying that Paul had listened to what the disciples remembered about the event? Whichever, verse 23

establishes authority. This is from the Lord!

The recollection brings to the forefront the meaning behind the Lord's Supper. It is a memorial service, intended to make fresh to every participant the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf. The broken bread points to his broken body. The fruit of the vine represents his shed blood.

It also brings to the forefront the establishment of a new covenant. The old covenant was based on cold legalism and empty ritual. The new covenant was based on God grace and mercy.

Every time a Christian partakes of the Lord's Supper, it does two things. One, it brings to remembrance what Jesus did, or it memorializes him. Second, it proclaims his death, while pointing toward resurrection. The entire Gospel message is expressed in symbolic form in this sacred meal. Thus, it should never be observed or taken lightly.

An examination (vv. 27-32).

Paul warns us to never enter this worship without first making sure we are worthy. He calls for an examination. Note, he does not call the pastor or deacons to examine others. It is to be a personal examination, between the individual heart and God. No one can judge whether or not another has the right attitude to participate in the Lord's Supper. However, Paul suggests that when Christian people are not living right, it will show in their demeanor and health.

A Correction (vv. 33-34).

This passage ends with a simple correction. Don't come to the table of the Lord to satisfy physical hunger. If you are hungry, eat at home. When you do enter into the sacred meal, be gracious to one another. There is no place for self-centeredness around the Lord's table.

White is a member of First Church, Clinton.

LIFE AND WORK

The call for obedient response

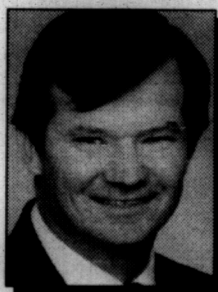
Mark 1:16-20; 2:13-14; 3:13-19

By Hugh Plunkett

Do you remember "The Love Boat?" I remember one episode in which captain Stuben performed a wedding ceremony on board the ship. I distinctly remember wondering how he would handle the "Till death do you part" question. The show's writers got around it by substituting the word, "as long as love lasts." How shallow. Many people are unwilling to make firm, long-term commitments to anyone or anything. The phrase "total commitment" is not in their vocabularies. They want escape clauses that will allow them to bail out of relationships when the going gets rough. People

presented with Jesus' call to discipleship need to realize that he does not accept excuses. He calls for quick acceptance of his summons to discipleship. He demands commitment to him and his work.

Obey instantly (1:16-20). Walking on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus called Simon, Andrew, James, and John to follow him. They understood commitment, much like the following riddle: "I represent my country. I'm always ready for service. I go wherever I'm sent. I do what I am asked to do. I stick to my task until it's done. I don't strike back when I'm struck. I don't give up when I'm licked. I



Plunkett

keep up to date. I find no job too small. I work well on a team for big jobs. I'm crowned with a mark of service. What am I?" The answer is a postage stamp! People need to realize that Jesus expects them to respond to his call to discipleship with prompt, radical obedience.

Commit totally (2:13-14). As Jesus again walked along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he called Levi, a tax collector. Levi immediately left his tax collecting booth and followed Jesus. It is interesting to note that while Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen and resumed their occupations on at least one occasion, Levi turned his back on everything. He never did go back and resume his career. Do you know a good definition of obedience? Obedience is doing what you are told to do, when you are told to do it, cheerfully.

Join with others to do Jesus' work (3:13-19). We need to understand that Jesus calls diverse people to follow him and he expects them to work together in his cause. Each follower retains his individuality while contributing to a oneness of purpose. For several years our church has given a portrayal of Leonardo's "The Last Supper" at Easter. We call it "The Living Last Supper." Twelve men are chosen to depict each of the disciples and another is chosen to portray Jesus. They are bankers, farmers, an architect, a parole officer, and business men of all sorts. It is a diverse group.

Jesus did much the same thing when he chose the original 12. They were different men from different locales with different family backgrounds. Jesus knew that such a group would have to have a singleness of purpose to survive. Their purpose was to know and

serve Jesus with all their heart, soul, and spirit.

Can you imagine how it was when Jesus returned to his Father in Heaven and all gathered around to hear what he had done on earth. "What plan did you set up for saving the world?" an angel asks.

"I selected 12 men of different characters and abilities and spent three years with them, teaching them and showing them the Father through me. In the end, one of them betrayed me and the others deserted me. I died alone, between common thieves," Jesus answered. The angel replied, "You have entrusted your mission to devices of these unpredictable men?"

"Just watch," Jesus said. The world was turned upside down by eleven men completely sold out to Jesus. That is the commitment discipleship requires.

Plunkett is minister of music and adults at Clarksdale Church.

Texas exec to retire in 2000

DALLAS (BP) — William M. "Bill" Pinson Jr. has announced his plans to retire as executive director of the 2.7 million-member Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) on Jan. 31, 2000.

Pinson announced his retirement plans at the Jan. 28 meeting of the BGCT administrative committee. He was elected executive director of the BGCT executive board in May 1982, assuming the post in January 1983.



Pinson

Pinson, a native of Fort Worth, came to the BGCT after five years as president of Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

He was pastor of First Church in Wichita Falls from 1975-77. From 1963-75, he was professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

He served as associate secretary of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission from 1957 to 1963.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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EGQ BWDGE GVOY AC

EGQ RAUQB AC DAO.

NMZQ EUQYEP-EUA:

LWJEP-YWYQ

Clue: C = F

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Nine: Fifty Eight.

YouthLink 2000 leaders working on Y2K

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Leaders preparing for the YouthLink 2000 events are monitoring closely work on the Year 2000 computer chip problem, according to co-chairpersons Dean Finley of the North American Mission Board and Richard Ross of LifeWay Christian Resources.

Scheduled Dec. 29, 1999, to Jan. 1, 2000, in seven U.S. cities, the YouthLink conferences are expected to involve tens of thousands of Southern Baptist youth in worship, Bible study, ministry opportunities and interactive exhibits.

At the national level, the YouthLink 2000 executive steering committee is working directly with national hotel chains, arena and stadium management offices, public utility companies, and city governments.

At the local level, YouthLink 2000 site coordinators, meeting planners working full time for YouthLink, are doing similar monitoring with local hotels, transportation systems, and support services.

Both national and local YouthLink 2000 leaders also are collecting certificates of Y2K compliance from entities related to the event.

The YouthLink 2000 Internet site (www.youthlink2000.org) provides full information about the event. Beginning in early February, visitors to the site will be able to read city-by-city progress toward full Y2K compliance, including information on meeting facilities, hotels, transportation systems, and public utilities.

"Because YouthLink 2000 ends at midnight on Dec. 31, the event will be over before any potential chip problem might arise," Ross said. "Since the potential for problems is anticipated during the hours immediately following the close of YouthLink 2000, the executive steering committee feels a strong responsibility to be aware of any potential problems."

Earlier this year, SBC pastors and youth ministers were sent a letter encouraging them to meet with their youth parents late

in 1999 to plan the trip home from YouthLink.

Ross said, "Based on their perception at that time of how serious the Y2K threat is, we want them to consider:

- ◆ Staying through the midnight service, returning to their hotel for a little sleep, and then driving home Saturday morning.

- ◆ Staying through the midnight service and returning home that night, avoiding glitches in hotel equipment and services.

- ◆ Staying through the noon service on New Year's Eve, and then returning home for a local service at midnight to harvest the decisions that have been brewing during the three days at YouthLink.

"We want churches to consider these options," he continued, "rather than have their teenagers miss the entire event."

People with concerns not addressed in the information on the YouthLink Internet site or who do not have Internet access may call the YouthLink 2000 national office toll-free at 1-888-YOURLINK.

Y2K planning more than just checking computers

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Much has been written and discussed about Y2K, and as the new millennium approaches the debate intensifies.

The prophecies for society in the dawn of the new millennium span from the near apocalyptic to a confidence there will be no grave consequences from this programming "shortcut."

Unable to process the next millennium, computers threaten to bring the international economy crashing down with them. The debate continues whether government is responding adequately. An estimated 15% of software applications prone to Y2K problems won't get fixed before the year 2000.

For each story of doom and gloom, someone opines that the crisis is much ado about nothing.

So which is it — grave impending crisis or minor nuisance? Or is it somewhere in between? One soon gathers that not even the experts agree on what may or may not happen!

Several months ago, The New York Times reported the power industry was woefully behind in addressing the Y2K problem — a situation that renders any other debate on the subject moot since there would be no power to run anything anyway.

Then, roughly a month later, a list ran down which industries were on target in addressing the problem and which weren't. That writer felt the power industry was ahead of every other industry.

Another factor that comes into play is the simple fact that not only are the simple dates affected, but often the algorithm used by the computer to do its myriad calculations are date-dependent to do the complex calculations.

The problem affects mainframes that store vast databases. These mainframes use older programming languages, prompting some wags to say that computer programmers will be recruited from nursing homes.

The scope of the problem lies somewhere between societal crash and slight blip in activity. Since this problem has been recognized for some years now (some companies and agencies that employ a six-year renewal schedule stumbled upon the problem in 1994), attempts have been made to stem the damage.

Since glitches will be anticipated in the first days and months of the new millennium, employees will be trained in customer service skills to resolve any problems that may arise.

It goes without saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Thus, for your personal peace of mind and for the security of your church, the following tips should help as you prepare for and face any problems in the coming millennium.

- Computers: All Apple Macintoshes are Y2K-compliant; manufacturers say Intel PCs built after 1995 are Y2K-compliant. Obviously, Apple retaining control of the manufacture and distribution of its operating system has an advantage.

Even if you have a post-1995 Intel PC, make sure your computer is Y2K-compliant by setting the date and time on the computer's calendar to 11:58 p.m., Dec. 31, 1999, and let it run into 2000.

If it does, turn the computer off after five minutes, then turn it on again. See that it retains the "correct" date and time as

set for your test. This ensures that your system is truly Y2K "rollover"-compliant. Make sure you "back up" your data before you start this procedure, just in case your machine isn't Y2K-compliant!

Even if your computer's operating system functions properly in the new century, it doesn't mean your software will.

For instance, Quicken versions 1 through 4 for DOS won't work in 2000 and neither will Microsoft Excel 5.0a for Apple's PowerPC. The newer versions of these programs are 2000-compliant. Call the manufacturer to find out whether your current software is Y2K-ready.

- Credit cards: Most merchants' equipment now accepts cards with expiration dates beyond 1999, but be forewarned that you

could encounter a problem in processing a card with an expiration date of 2000.

You may also risk inaccurate bills from a potential glitch within the programs interconnecting the card issuer with merchants, banks, and third-party processors.

- Your bank or credit union: The Federal Reserve is making contingency plans to assist banks that may be crippled by computer problems in January 2000.

Large U.S. banks are expected to have their systems ready, but many community banks and credit unions have dragged their feet on Y2K problems.

Foreign banks are also lagging; U.S. banks that trade data with them can be vulnerable.

If your bank can't assure you

of year 2000 compliance by the end of 1999, find a bank that can.

Prior to New Year's Eve 1999, withdraw a couple of weeks' spending money in cash just in case your ATM is temporarily down. You may want to consider starting a contingency fund to build up reserves now before the year 2000 comes.

- If a large national company issues your insurance policies, your Y2K risks are minimal, but be wary of small regional insurers.

A company with a computer that is not Y2K-compliant might, for example, cancel a policy running through 2001 because the computer reads the policy as having expired in 1901.

Large companies are expected to have their Y2K fixes done by the end of this year and then do thorough testing. Some smaller ones haven't started at all.

- Your taxes: Seeing the IRS computers frozen might be a dream come true for many folks, but as with any other dream, reality has a way of waking you up.

You're still expected to pay scheduled taxes plus any applicable interest even if it takes the agency a year to communicate that to you. Still, to avoid having a significant refund in 2000 fall into the millennium glitch, calculate your 1999 tax withholding — for federal, state, and local filings — as close as possible to what you'll owe. Make sure you receive and keep all receipts.

- Your broker or mutual fund: While this may not seem to be the realm of a church activity, many congregations do invest in annuities, mutual funds, and other investment programs for the pension of their staffs.

Approach your broker in the same way as you approach your banker. Seek out their plans for Y2K compliance. Again, keep accurate records and receipts.

